

WAR AND NAVY DEPARTMENTS AND
OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
Joint Intelligence Study Publishing Board

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9 October 1943

From:
To:



Subject: Authority for spelling of place names in JANIS volumes.

1. As the result of a slight misunderstanding we find that there are some BGN corrections in the text of JANIS #38 which are slightly different from the spellings given on maps agreed on as standards. One case in point is Sofia, which is spelled Sofia on the 500,000 maps and which BGN has changed in all of our texts to Sofiya. We are quite ready to admit that this is not a major error, but I am putting down what I understood to be our agreement in order that you may have it in writing. I would appreciate any differences of opinion between yourself and myself being aired out immediately.

2. We originally agreed with Pete that in every case we would use spellings as found on the 250,000 maps. When coverage on the 250,000 is not available, we are to use the spellings found on the 500,000's. On the 500,000's, where places are spelled differently in areas covered by the overlapping of adjacent sheets, the BGN is to recommend which of the spellings is to be used. In the spellings of features not given on the 250,000 or the 500,000, spellings are to be used as recommended by the BGN. I am sure that this understanding is clearly in your mind.

3. The principal difficulty which has arisen has been that of the BGN changing spellings in our text. Said spellings were made in accordance with the 500,000 maps. The BGN felt that these were incorrect (e.g., Sofia example). For practical purposes it will be confusing if we indicate in any place other than inside parentheses or in the glossary a spelling different from the way it is given on the standard maps. I understand from your research analyst that there are even some typographical errors on the 250,000 (Pirdol should be Pirdop). However, unfortunate as it may seem, it is still necessary for us to perpetuate such a typographical error in the JANIS text, as these maps are the only ones that planners and task force commanders have available. I feel that this type of mistake can only be corrected in the glossary, and it is for exactly this type of thing that we are including the glossary in the JANIS volume.

JCS review completed

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4. In some chapters, notably the topics of coastal hydrography and coasts in detail, the place names are given in the text as they are given on a reference chart included as a part of the text. This reference chart is a portion of an existing BA or HO chart. My suggestion for this case is that we make all spellings in the text conform to spellings on the chart, and that if BGN knows that some of these spellings are incorrect, we should then put the correct spelling in parentheses after the place when it is first given. For example, on some of the BA charts, I have seen Akhtopol spelled Agathopoli; I would suggest that the text spell it in the latter form and your recommended spelling follow this in parentheses.

5. In Chapter II, JANIS of Bulgaria, the BGN has recommended several spelling changes for names of geographic regions and sub-regions. You recognize that these regions are truly geographic and bear little relationship to locally observed divisions or names. I would recommend using the research man's designation and spellings of regions and sub-regions except where reference is clearly made to a known mountain range or the like.

6. It is understood that the promulgating letter or the preface to any JANIS must make reference to the problem of spellings of place names. We shall have to take care of typographical errors and bad transliterations by indicating that the glossary has the places spelled correctly, but that we have used the spellings in the text exactly as they are given on the standard maps for the study.

7. There is no doubt in my mind that we all agree that these are not scholastic approaches but are approaches designed for practical reasons. Surely, if you can figure some way out of this situation, we would be glad to honor any recommendations which you have to offer that would correct misspellings yet not lead to confusion in the minds of planners or task force commanders who do not have familiarity with the various languages in use in the Balkans.

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